

REPORT – IT'S THE LAW

Learn the signs, look for them, and report any suspicions (may be anonymous). It's a crime to ignore abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child or an adult with a disability.

LEARN

- Memorize signs and symptoms
- Visit apdcares.org/zero-tolerance for additional facts and resources

LOOK

- Keep an eye out for signs, note any sudden changes in behavior or condition
- Pay attention to physical appearance, mood, and interactions with others
- Take note of caregiver's attitude (e.g., controlling, uncaring, under the influence of drugs/alcohol)

REPORT

If you suspect someone is being abused, neglected, or exploited:

- Call 911 if the person's life or health is in immediate danger
- Call the Florida Abuse Hotline toll-free at **1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)**, file a report online at reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us, or fax a statement to **1-800-914-0004**
- Be prepared to provide as much information as you can about your concerns

Zero Tolerance is an initiative of the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities. Together, we can end the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with disabilities.



agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

1-866-APD-CARES (1-866-273-2273)

apdcares.org/zero-tolerance

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ZERO TOLERANCE

**ENDING THE ABUSE, NEGLECT,
AND EXPLOITATION OF PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES**



agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

BE THE DIFFERENCE

People with disabilities are at much greater risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited than the non-disabled population. **But you have the power to stop these crimes.**

WHAT IS ABUSE?

- Actual or threatened physical or emotional harm, including slapping, burning, choking, pushing, punching, hair-pulling, pinching, kicking, biting, cursing, verbal threats, and name-calling.
- Bullying, intimidation, taunting
- Cyberbullying, including unwanted messages or photos via phone, text, email, or social media
- Encouraging people to hurt themselves

Signs may include:

- Bruises, burns, cuts, broken bones, sudden difficulty walking or sitting
- Fear of particular person or place
- Nightmares or disrupted sleep patterns
- Sudden/unexplained changes in behavior or physical condition
- Incontinence in someone previously toilet-trained
- Vaginal or rectal pain, painful urination, frequent UTIs

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

- Using force, fraud, or coercion to recruit, hide, transport, sell, or buy a person for sex, labor, or unpaid services
- Practices may include beating, torture, lying, withholding wages, threats of harm, intimidation, humiliation, false promises of love/friendship or money/reward

WHAT IS NEGLECT?

- Failure to give someone basic care to keep them healthy and safe
- May be physical or medical (e.g., lack of supervision, ignoring dietary restrictions, not providing medication as prescribed, withholding personal or medical care)

Signs may include:

- Poor hygiene, deteriorating appearance, body odor
- Bedsores
- Dehydration
- Unexplained weight loss
- Lack of needed adaptive aids (e.g., glasses, walkers, or communication devices)
- Lack of prescribed medications or medical care

WHAT IS EXPLOITATION?

- Theft of money or property, embezzlement, or other forms of financial fraud against an adult with a disability

Examples of exploitation include:

- A parent taking their adult child's money or possessions without consent
- A live-in caregiver tricking or threatening the person into buying an item or service (such as a premium television channel) that they will not be using
- A companion provider telling the person that they must pay for all of the companion's meals, gasoline, movie tickets, and other expenses during community outings

Signs may include:

- Sudden decrease in bank account balances
- Larger or more frequent withdrawals from bank accounts
- Problems paying bills or buying necessities despite adequate income or disability benefit payments
- Changes in wills or financial documents
- Victim begins to act secretly
- Unexplained disappearance of money or possessions

